



NCT is seeking to understand the issues parents face in the early years.

The first 1,000 days

NCT (the National Childbirth Trust) is conducting a UK-wide, two-year, longitudinal study that focuses on the experiences of parents within the first 1,000 days of their babies' development.

The charity is inviting first-time parents to take part in the study when their babies are around six to nine months old. Parents will be asked about different aspects of their family life, such as their infants' sleep, play and feeding and balancing their work and home lives. The same parents will be followed up when their children are around 18-21 months old.

The first 1,000 days, a critical time in a baby's development, can bring challenges and worries for new parents. NCT is keen to understand these issues and hopes the project will provide information to guide future strategy, develop new services, increase geographic and social reach and help inform debate and policy on maternity and family services in the UK.

For further information about the study, visit www.nct.org.uk/press-release/nct-and-pampers-launch-two-year-study-parents-first-1000-days

Meningitis B vaccine rejected

The government body that advises the NHS on vaccine policy, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), has decided that the meningitis B vaccine (Bexsero) will not be offered for routine childhood vaccination.

Licensed for use in January 2013, the vaccine protects against 73% of meningitis B strains in the UK and can be administered to infants aged two months or older. In a position statement, the JCVI argued that routine vaccination would not represent a cost-effective use of NHS resources. There was also concern that immunity may wear off over time.

Sue Davie, Chief Executive of Meningitis Trust/Meningitis UK, says: "This is extremely disappointing news after all our supporters' and our hard work over decades to introduce a vaccine."

Is it cows' milk allergy?

A campaign by Mead Johnson Nutrition aims to raise awareness of the symptoms of cows' milk allergy (CMA) to parents and healthcare professionals (HCPs).

CMA is the most common food allergy in infants and young children. It may present with a wide variety of symptoms but it is important to recognise and manage CMA as early as possible, to help provide rapid relief of symptoms and ensure children receive a nutritionally adequate diet to support ongoing growth and development.

A survey of just over 2,000 mothers, commissioned by Mead Johnson Nutrition, revealed that diagnosis of CMA could take multiple appointments with a GP; the majority of parents visit their GP three to four times before a diagnosis is made.

Raising the bar: care for mothers and babies

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has issued a quality standard on postnatal care to improve the care and support for women and their babies in the postnatal period. For most families this time is uncomplicated, but for those who develop complications care should be tailored to meet specific needs.

NICE quality standards aim to help commissioners, health, social care and public health professionals and service providers improve the quality of care that they deliver by demonstrating high-priority improvement areas alongside a set of recommended measures. The postnatal care quality standard contains 11 statements to support the measurable improvement of services, most notably with regard to:

- ensuring mothers are aware of the health benefits of breastfeeding
- reducing the risk of sudden death syndrome
- assessing women for postnatal depression.

NICE quality standards are not mandatory but a healthcare system is obliged to have regarded them when planning and delivering services.

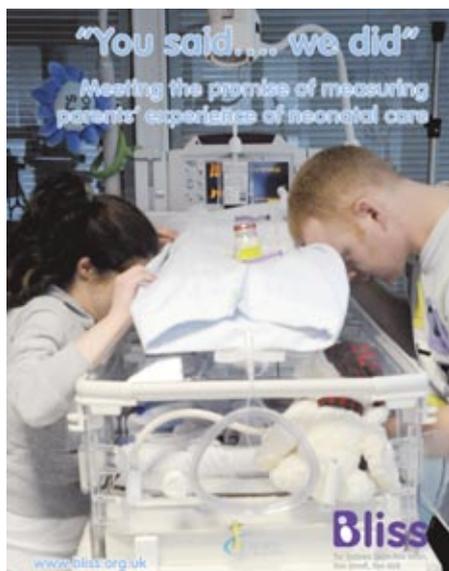
To view a copy of the NICE quality standard on postnatal care visit <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/QS37>



A mother and her son who suffers with CMA.

The *Is it cows' milk allergy?* campaign aims to help parents and provide support for HCPs. Those HCPs wishing to learn more about CMA can view a series of educational resources including:

- CMA microsite (www.doctors.net.uk/cma)
- a Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) accredited module (www.doctors.net.uk/cma_ecme)
- free-to-attend continuing professional development (CPD) accredited educational events (www.allerni.co.uk).



You said.... we did

Bliss, the special care baby charity, has produced a report that focuses on the importance of parent insight for improving neonatal care. *You said.... we did – meeting the promise of measuring parents' experience of neonatal care* highlights the need for neonatal units to pay particular attention to how parent experiences and perspective can be gathered and used to inform service planning and delivery.

The report draws on information from a national survey and consultation carried out by Bliss and concludes with a set of key recommendations to enable healthcare professionals to work in partnership with families to deliver a high quality service with improved outcomes for all.

For more information email janea@bliss.org.uk

World Prematurity Day 2013

On Sunday 17 November, Bliss will join together with other international organisations to raise awareness for the 15 million babies that are born prematurely around the world each year.

The colour for World Prematurity Day is purple and this year Bliss would like as many people as possible to 'share a hug' and send in their photos via social media. It may be a parent's first cuddle with their baby, parents hugging each other for comfort or health professionals giving a parent a hug for support.

So dress in purple to show your support and help make a real difference to the lives of babies born too soon.

For more information visit www.bliss.org.uk

Small drop in SIDS deaths 'not good enough'

Safer baby sleep charity The Lullaby Trust has called for urgent action to save babies' lives, as figures reveal that the decrease in the number of unexplained infant deaths in England and Wales has stalled.

The latest infant mortality figures from the Office for National Statistics show that there were 244 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) deaths in 2011, a reduction of only 17 from 2010. The Lullaby Trust's Chief Executive Francine Bates says: "We are extremely disappointed to see such a small, statistically insignificant reduction in the number of SIDS deaths. It's just not good enough. We continue to compare poorly with other countries in Europe which have managed to reduce their deaths more significantly."

Smoking in pregnancy is a significant risk factor for SIDS and it has been estimated that over 100 SIDS deaths



could be prevented every year if pregnant women did not smoke. A report – *Smoking Cessation in Pregnancy* – published by the Smoking in Pregnancy Challenge Group led by The Lullaby Trust and the UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies, shows how some health professionals lack training in smoking cessation techniques and discussing smoking with pregnant mothers.

To see the report visit www.lullabytrust.org.uk/document.doc?id=313

Neonatal medicines mobile app

Health Education Thames Valley and Health Education Wessex have launched a neonatal medicines management app for use on smartphones.

Free to download, the mobile app is an interactive learning tool that enables staff caring for neonates to learn, practise, test themselves and enhance their knowledge of neonatal medicines management. The app uses content produced by local NHS neonatal nursing, pharmaceutical and medical experts ensuring that neonatal staff are using evidence-based best practice.

For more information visit:

www.workforce.southcentral.nhs.uk/libraries_elearning/elearning/mobile_learning_for_the_nhs/neonatal_medicines_mobile_app.aspx



A REaSoN to save the date

This year's REaSoN conference was a huge success with nearly 400 people attending over the two days. Ninety-eight per cent of delegates rated the event as excellent or good and most lectures were scored very highly – many achieving over 90% as excellent or good.

Comments from some of the delegates:

"A great overview of current and new therapies and time for networking."

"Probably one of the best REaSoN conferences that I have attended."

"I thoroughly enjoyed my first

experience at REaSoN. It was interesting, sociable, and very eye opening. The speakers were knowledgeable and brought forward new thoughts that I will be happy to take to my unit."

"Wonderful event. Thought provoking, interesting, broad-based and balanced."

Save the date for next year's REaSoN: 30 June-1 July 2014.

REaSoN
2014